

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING DIVISION
INSTRUCTIONAL & INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

GENERAL SUBJECT: Signs		NUMBER: IIM-TE-316.1
		SUPERSEDES: MM-316
SPECIFIC SUBJECT: Engine Braking and Other Noise Restriction Signs		DATE: August 18, 2016
		SUNSET DATE: Upon Incorporation into the VA Supplement
DIRECTED TO: Regional Operations Directors Regional Traffic Engineers Residency Engineers/Administrators Regional Operations Maintenance Managers		APPROVAL: /original signed by/ Raymond J. Khoury, P.E. State Traffic Engineer Richmond, VA August 18, 2016

Changes are shaded.

Continuing expansion of business and residential development along highway corridors is generating unsolicited requests for signs to counter noise problems. In response, VDOT occasionally receives requests for various regulatory and warning (advisory) signs directed at eliminating or limiting certain vehicle operation practices ~~have been installed~~.

The following has been considered regarding this issue:

- ❑ Properly installed and maintained engine braking and other vehicular equipment does not produce offensive or obnoxious noise levels when used responsibly.
- ❑ There are no state statutes restricting the use of engine brakes, although the Code of Virginia [§ 46.2-1049](#) requires that vehicles be equipped with an “exhaust system in good working order” that “prevents excessive or unusual levels of noise”.
- ❑ Effectiveness of these signs at reducing noise levels has not been demonstrated.
- ❑ Existing motor vehicle statutes addressing noise emitted by improperly maintained vehicles should be effective if properly enforced. ~~Highway statutes do not address improperly maintained vehicles.~~
- ❑ Under certain circumstances it could be preferable for truck drivers to use engine braking to more effectively decelerate.

Therefore, since this issue is relative to motor vehicle regulations, and not related to traffic control or safety, the following actions shall be taken:

- ❑ ~~Effective immediately, Engine braking and other noise restriction signs are not to be installed or permitted.~~
- ❑ Existing engine braking and other noise restriction regulatory and warning signs shall be removed immediately. This may require rescinding permits and having such signs removed.
- ❑ ~~Existing engine braking and other noise restriction warning signs shall be removed, as time, opportunity and other conditions deem appropriate, but no later than July 1, 2003. This may require rescinding permits and having such signs removed.~~

If future requests for engine braking or other motor vehicle related noise restriction measures are received, the requestor should be referred to the Department of Motor Vehicles or the applicable police agency to identify measures at their disposal to address the problem.

This issue ~~has been~~ was previously discussed with ~~the State Environmental Engineer~~ Environmental Division, Mr. Earl T. Robb, the Director of Public Relations for the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the ~~Director of the Bureau of Administrative and Support Services for the Department of~~ State Police, and each agrees with the direction that this document is setting.

CC:

Mohammad Mirshahi, P.E. - Deputy Chief Engineer
 District Engineers/Administrators
 Dr. Jose Gomez, P.E. - VCTIR Director
 Jessie Yung, P.E. - FHWA Virginia Division Acting Administrator
 Vanloan Nguyen, P.E. – Traffic Engineering Division ADA for Traffic Control Devices
 Mena Lockwood, P.E. – Traffic Engineering Division ADA for Engineering Analysis